

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-11

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY JAKARTA IMMEDIATE
COAST GUARD WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0260

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINR, LY

SUBJECT: MUTINY ABOARD LIBYAN TANKER

1. FOLLOWING PRESS GUIDANCE PREPARED BY NEA/AFN FOR USE
ON IF-ASKED BASIS REPEATED FYI AND FOR USE AT YOUR
DISCRETION, WITH FONOFF:

QUESTION: HAS A LIBYAN TANKER BEEN TAKEN OVER BY
MUTINEERS?

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ANSWER: THE COAST GUARD RECEIVED A RADIO DISTRESS MESSAGE
FROM THE LIBYAN TANKER AIN TAURGA MAY 30 STATING THAT
THERE WAS A DISTURBANCE AMONG THE CREW AND THAT THE SHIP
OFFICERS HAD BEEN FORCED TO ARM THEMSELVES. THE VESSEL,
ENROUTE TO BAYONNE, NEW JERSEY WAS AT THAT TIME 500 MILES
EAST OF HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA. THE STATE DEPARTMENT IN-
FORMED THE LIBYAN GOVERNMENT OF THE SITUATION AND SOUGHT

THE LIBYAN GOVERNMENT'S ATTITUDE TOWARD A POSSIBLE INTERVENTION BY THE U.S. COAST GUARD. THE LIBYAN GOVERNMENT SUBSEQUENTLY REQUESTED OUR ASSISTANCE AND INFORMED US THAT THE CREW MEMBERS ARE INDONESIANS AND THAT

THE OFFICERS ARE GERMANS. WE HAVE BEEN IN CONTINUING CONTACT WITH THE LIBYAN GOVERNMENT ON THIS MATTER BOTH HERE AND IN TRIPOLI.

QUESTION: WHAT IS THE CURRENT STATUS ON BOARD THE SHIP?

ANSWER: THE COAST GUARD CUTTER VIGILANT RENDEZVOUSED WITH THE LIBYAN VESSEL EARLY THIS MORNING SOME 350 MILES DUE EAST OF NEW YORK CITY. THE SHIP'S MASTER INFORMED THE COAST GUARD THAT 5 CREW MEMBERS, ARMED WITH GUNS AND KNIVES, WERE WANDERING THROUGHOUT THE SHIP AND REQUESTED THAT THE COAST GUARD BOARD THE VESSEL.

QUESTION: WHAT IS THE CAUSE OF THE DISTURBANCE?

ANSWER: WE ARE NOT YET AWARE OF THE COMPLAINTS OF THESE CREWMEN. THE LIBYAN GOVERNMENT HAS SENT WORD TO THE CREW THAT COMPLAINTS WILL BE INVESTIGATED ONCE THE SHIP REACHES PORT.

QUESTION: DOES THE COAST GUARD INTEND TO BOARD THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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VESSEL?

ANSWER: THE COAST GUARD IS CURRENTLY ASSESSING THE SITUATION BY RADIO WITH THE SHIP'S MASTER AND HOPES MERELY TO ESCORT THE LIBYAN VESSEL TO NEW YORK. THE COAST GUARD DOES NOT INTEND TO BOARD THE AIN TAURGA UNLESS IT IS JUDGED NECESSARY TO PROTECT PERSONNEL ON BOARD.

QUESTION: WHAT IS THE CARGO OF THE VESSEL AND WHERE IS IT HEADED?

ANSWER: THE SHIP MASTER INFORMED THE COAST GUARD OF A CARGO OF 28,000 TONS OF HEAVY FUEL OIL AND THAT THE VESSEL IS HEADED FOR BAYONNE, NEW JERSEY WITH AN ETA OF 0800 JUNE 2. THE SHIP CONTINUES ON A COURSE TOWARD BAYONNE AND THE VIGILANT HAS TAKEN STATION ONE HALF MILE ASTERN.

QUESTION: WOULD THE LIBYAN GOVERNMENT OBJECT TO THE COAST GUARD BOARDING THE SHIP?

ANSWER: THE LIBYAN GOVERNMENT HAS REQUESTED OUR FULL ASSISTANCE, INCLUDING BOARDING SHOULD THAT BE NECESSARY.

VANCE

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